



## Senate Press Office

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

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## Sen. Chance's Identity Theft Bill signed into law



ATLANTA – Governor Sonny Perdue has recently signed two measures that will further protect the identity of Georgia's consumers. In order to curb the rise of identity theft, Gov. Perdue introduced legislation during the 2008 session to establish an identity theft task force within the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI). Sponsored by Sen. Ronnie Chance (R-Tyrone), Senate Bill 388 creates a new GBI

task force that will investigate alleged identity theft, educate the public on how to protect themselves, support victims and train local law enforcement to combat identity theft.

"The state is taking an active role in preventing identity theft through this legislation, which I am confident will be an important step in curbing such illegal activity," said Sen. Chance. "With \$1 million in new funding in the state budget, SB 388 will enable the GBI to add eight investigative positions to the ID Theft Task Force to combat identity theft statewide."

The Governor also signed House Bill 130 to allow consumers to place or remove an immediate security freeze on their credit report for a \$3 fee. Under this legislation, each major consumer credit

reporting agency, Experian, Equifax and TransUnion, must offer this service to allow consumers to prohibit the release of their credit report or credit score to third parties.

As of August 1, consumers will be able to request a freeze electronically through Internet systems that each credit reporting agency is required to develop. Once submitted electronically, requests will be fulfilled within 15 minutes. A toll-free telephone number will also be provided, so that requests may be made over the phone. In order to make this service easily accessible to everyone, consumers who are 65 years of age or older, and those who are documented victims of identity fraud, will not be charged the \$3 fee for placing or removing a freeze.

“Identity theft is a rampant problem across the country, and I am pleased that we can offer our citizens added protection to keep them and their family safe,” added Sen. Chance. “These new laws give consumers the tools they need to protect their hard-earned savings, and give those who have fallen victim to this crime the immediate help they need to minimize the damage.”

For more information on the Georgia State Senate, please visit [www.senate.ga.gov](http://www.senate.ga.gov).

***Pictured above (L-R): Rep. Tommy Benton (R-Jefferson), Sen. Ronnie Chance (R-Tyrone), Sen. Renee Unterman (R-Buford) and Sen. Cecil Staton (R-Macon) flank Governor Sonny Perdue at a recent press conference, announcing the signing of two important consumer protection laws, SB 388 and HB 130.***

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*Sen. Ronnie Chance represents the 16<sup>th</sup> Senate District, which includes Lamar and Pike counties, and portions of Fayette, Monroe and Spalding counties. He may be reached by phone at 404.651.7738 or via e-mail at [ronnie.chance@senate.ga.gov](mailto:ronnie.chance@senate.ga.gov).*